

RHETORICAL STRUCTURE OF INTRODUCTION CHAPTERS

BY ENGLISH L1 AND L2 WRITERS

A RESEARCH PAPER

SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE SCHOOL

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS

FOR THE DEGREE

MASTER OF ARTS IN TESOL & LINGUISTICS,

WITH A CONCENTRATION IN TESOL

BY

CRISTIAN BETANCOURTH LOPEZ

DR. MEGUMI HAMADA - ADVISOR

BALL STATE UNIVERSITY

MUNCIE, INDIANA

MAY 2021

ABSTRACT

The Introduction chapter is one of the most important sections of research papers. In this section, the writer gives an overview of the relevant aspects discussed throughout the next paragraphs along with an outline of the paper's structure. Thus, the right choice of rhetorical moves in the Introduction chapter may determine the effectiveness in the delivery of ideas. The lack of awareness to choose the correct moves in this crucial section may be one of the difficulties faced by English learners compared to English native speakers. This study examines how English L1 and L2 writers differ in their choice of rhetorical moves and step categories in 10 Introduction chapters. The analysis was conducted by using the adapted CARS model by Swales (1990) to review Introduction chapters in academic papers. The frequency of occurrence of moves, and the step categories were identified. The findings indicate that there are differences in the types of moves employed by the two groups. As for move *Move 2*, in the NS group it was a *Conventional* move. However, in the NNS group this move was *Optional*. Regarding *Move 3*, the NS it was a *Conventional* move, while it was *Obligatory* in the NNS group. In relation to the step categories, two types were identified, *Optional* and *Conventional*. The results show that *Optional* was the most recurrent category. These outcomes demonstrate that there are differences in the application of moves and the frequency of step categories by English L1 and L2 writers. These findings may have significant implications for academic writing instructors and their students, who can easily identify the most appropriate rhetorical structures and incorporate that knowledge into their own writing.

Keywords: Rhetorical structure, Moves, Steps, Introduction chapters, L1 Writers, L2 Writers

Rhetorical Structure of Introduction Chapters by English L1 and L2 Writers

Second Language Acquisition (SLA) refers to how people start learning any language (L2) after having learned their first (L1) and predominant language (Hummel, 2014). This is a central concept to consider in this research since it is the big umbrella that covers L2 writing, which is a central theme throughout this study. L2 writing could be defined as any writing produced by L2 learners in any textual genre. The significance of the latter construct in this study is that it is opposed to L1 along the development of this research to find their rhetorical features and analyze them through the lenses of rhetorical structure.

In the last twenty years, the rhetorical structure theory has been the object of multiple studies when trying to explore different Ph.D., and master theses' chapters (e.g., Abdolmalaki et al., 2019; Bunton, 2002; Kawase, 2018; Loan & Pramoolsook, 2014; Pujiyanti, I. A et al., 2018). This theory has proven to be highly significant for textual analysis due to the ample scope of aspects covered by its application (e.g., clauses relationships, extensive textual genres, contrastive rhetoric, utility in the examination of narrative texts) (Mann & Thompson, 1988). A critical section in which the application of the Rhetorical Structure Theory is extremely useful is the Introduction chapter of master theses or research papers. Considering that an effective introduction chapter "is pivotal for the success of the whole thesis as it primarily sets the scene of the study and convinces the reader about the importance of the study" (Carbonell-Olivares, Gil-Salom & Soler-Monreal, 2009; Loan & Pramoolsook, 2014; Swales, 2004, as cited by Abdolmalaki et al., 2019, p. 117), it requires careful attention. Therefore, the analysis of the Introduction chapter is the focus of the present study.

The purpose of the current research is to analyze the rhetorical structure of 10 research papers' Introduction chapters written by English L1 and L2 students. More precisely, the aim of this research is to explore the difference in the application of moves and steps by the two groups. The method used in this study is the creation of a corpus integrating five papers written by English native speakers and five written by L2 learners. These papers are analyzed by utilizing the adapted CARS model by Swales (1990), which is a framework that describes the potential moves and steps that writers may take in their texts. These moves are named *Move 1 (Establishing a Territory)*, *Move 2 (Establishing a Niche)* and *Move 3 (Occupying the Niche)*. Each move holds different steps that may or may not appear throughout the papers. Therefore, the frequency of occurrence of each move and their steps will be determinant to describe the main differences between the L1 and L2 writers in respect to their papers. Moreover, there are three moves/steps categories that may be found throughout the ten papers that will demonstrate whether the moves/steps are *Obligatory*, *Conventional*, or *Optional*. The designation of these categories might show differences in the move/steps writer's decision-making.

As for the organization, this project starts with a description of the main concepts in the review of the literature and the presentation of the research questions. Then there is a description of the method and the data analysis. After that, the results of this research are presented along with their discussion. Finally, the conclusion section summarizes the main points covered in the study, their implications, and recommendations for further research. The findings of this study will likely add to the literature in this area and may be beneficial for instructors and students to evaluate the most appropriate ways to approach writing Introduction chapters in this genre.

Literature Review

Rhetorical Structure Theory

Da Cunha and Iruskieta (2010) affirm that the Rhetorical Structure Theory (RST) has been used as an effective tool to describe textual structure by analyzing the correlation between rhetorical and discursive features. (p.564) Another similar assumption about this theory is the one proposed by Van Lacum et al. (2014), who claim that Rhetorical Structure refers to the way in which the rhetorical moves are organized in a text (p.254). A study that encompasses this perspective is the one conducted by Kawase (2018), who explored Introduction chapters in traditional applied linguistics Ph.D. theses with the aim of analyzing their rhetorical moves to decipher their rhetorical structures. On the other hand, Taboada and Mann (2006, as cited by Da Cunha & Iruskieta, 2010) claim that “RST addresses text organization by relations that hold between parts of a text.” (p.564) In this regard, Abdolmalaki et al. (2019) carried out a study that aimed at comparing the linguistic realizations and rhetorical structures of twelve introduction chapters retrieved from Article-based and Traditional Ph.D. theses. The tool they employed for the data analysis was the move model proposed by Bunton (2002). Moreover, Pujiyanti et al. (2018) conducted a mixed-method research (qualitative and quantitative) study that examined the rhetorical structure of introduction chapters of English master theses written by Indonesian master’s students from the University of Bengkulu. They also focused on the frequency of communicative moves along with their steps. Furthermore, Loan and Pramoolsook (2014) carried through a research about the rhetorical structure of twelve M.A. theses Introduction chapters. The data providers were three universities found in the Southern part of Vietnam. The data analysis was done by utilizing the modified CARS model by Bunton (2002). The notions

and studies described above support the claim proposed by Mann and Thompson (1988), who affirm that Rhetorical Structure Theory has become the base of research in contrastive rhetoric. Besides, they point out that the descriptive side of this theory has extensively been utilized as an instrument to analyze a diverse scope of writing genres. (p.244)

Contrastive Rhetoric

Before approaching the concept of “Contrastive Rhetoric” and its significance in the study of rhetorical structures, it is important to define one of its main components, “rhetoric”. In this regard, Nir and Berman (2010) affirm that this concept is usually referred to as the teaching of the efficient use of language. From this perspective, speakers and writers learn how to choose the most effective linguistic tools that best match their intention to produce language. (p.746) As for Contrastive Rhetoric, Sanchez-Escobar (2012) claims that it “initially had a pedagogical concern...it combined both contrastive and error analysis, but instead of focusing on syntactic issues, it progressed to analyze discourse structures across culture and genres.” (p. 21) On the other hand, contrastive rhetoric explores in which aspects EFL and ESL features are alike or distinct from cultural and linguistic angles regarding writing. (Connor, 2002, p.493)

Another important remark made by Sanchez-Escobar (2012) is that “for both contrastive analysis and contrastive rhetoric, L1 stood in the way of the acquisition of L2 writing (p. 21). Likewise, Friedlander (1990) affirms that the text quality may decrease if ESL writers try to resort to memory in their L1 to first, retrieve information about the writing theme, and then, translate it into English. This process may cause a short-term memory overburden and thus, lead the writers to perform poorly. The latter claim is supported by Connor (2002), who suggests that ESL writing productions are often affected by the interference caused by the transfer of their L1

rhetorical and linguistic rules. (p. 494) Therefore, the most plausible explanation for this failure in L2 writing production is the rhetorical distinctions between their L1 and their target language. (Fakhri, 2009, p. 307) Furthermore, Kaplan (1966, as cited by El-daly, 2012) notes that “no matter how proficient the FL learners, their compositions will be rhetorically deviant from the accepted norms of the target language.” (p. 159) Thus, the way individuals write in languages different from their L1 reveals the rhetorical patterns accepted and promoted by their culture. Moreover, “in spite of mastering syntactic structures foreign students are incompetent writers of academic English” (Kaplan 1966, as cited by El-daly, 2012, p.159).

Second Language Acquisition Theory

This research can be placed within the theoretical framework of the Sociocultural Theory, which is a theory that states that knowledge schemes are built through social interaction. (Hummel, 2014, p. 91) The most important idea proposed by this theory is that “higher forms of human mental activity are *mediated*” (Mitchell, R et al., 2019). In language, mediation can be seen when we interact with events that take place outside of our present setting (Hummel, 2014, p. 91). Thus, in this case, writing would be the means for learners to interact with others by putting their thoughts into written texts. In relation to the academic environment, writing is perceived as “a social practice that involves conscious or sub-conscious knowledge of the normative writer-reader interaction practices of the academic discourse community” (Chandrasegaran, 2008, p. 239). Thus, Chandrasegaran (2008) claims that formal writing and the shared community values become the thought regulator of efficient writing for the target reading audiences.

L2 Writing

The concept of Second Language Writing (L2 writing) can be better understood by first clarifying what “second language” is. As Mitchell, R et al. (2019) point out, any language(s) that individuals learn upon their childhood can be considered a second language. Thus, regardless of the number of languages a person can learn, they will all be categorized as second languages. On the other hand, Hummel (2014) gives a definition of SLA that encompasses the one mentioned above. This author claims that SLA denotes the starting process of learning any language (L2) once an individual has acquired a first language (L1) (p.1). By the same token, Ortega (2009) affirms that SLA “is the scholarly field of inquiry that investigates the human capacity to learn languages other than the first, during late childhood, adolescence or adulthood, and once the first language or languages have been acquired (p. 2).”

Therefore, from the definitions above, it can be inferred that L2 writing refers to any type of writing performed by learners whose L1 is different from the target language. Additionally, a significant aspect of L2 writing is that it “represents a formidable but necessary task for a competent L2 learner, and a lack of this skill in higher education may reflect negatively on the NNS writer.” (Hinkel, 1997, p. 362) For instance, L2 beginner writers around the globe, as pointed out by Sajid (2016), usually go through difficulties to produce high-class writing. (p. 71)

Hence, there are various aspects that might be the reason for significant differences between L1 and L2 writing. One of these factors is based on the extent to which the writers know about the distinct genres and their rhetorical patterns (discursive competence). Another distinction is their grammatical competence, which has to do with their familiarity with the language system, and their understanding of grammar and vocabulary. For the same reason, Yeh

(2015) affirms that to reach an advanced level in writing, it is indispensable for L2 learners to focus on grammar. In addition, L1 and L2 writers may differ in their sociolinguistic competence. It is measured by their accuracy to appropriately utilize language in distinct environments. Besides, they need to develop the capacity to employ diverse strategies to communicate (strategic competence) (Canale & Swain, 1980, as cited by Hyland, 2003). Further, Silva (2012) affirms that L2 “composing processes seem generally more laborious than those in the L1. Planning requires more effort and generates material that is less detailed, developed and useful” (p. 28). Moreover, this author claims that putting thoughts into written words (transcribing) is more demanding too. Furthermore, at the revision stage, writers pay more attention to grammatical and lexical aspects, yet their revision skills go to a lesser extent. (Silva, 2012, p. 28).

Another difference that Silva (2012) found was that ESL texts are usually shorter and underdeveloped since their paragraph unification and cohesion are lower than those of L1 writers. In addition, they use reduced figurative language, and they have more difficulty naming elusive shades in words as well. Thus, ESL writers make more mistakes compared to their L1 peers (p. 28). Thus, writing in an L2 goes beyond being proficient in the target language. The L2 writer needs to “asumir las implicaciones que esa práctica tiene en la representación del conocimiento a través de géneros en muchas ocasiones divergentes respecto a los géneros conocidos en la L1” (Núñez, 2018). At the same time, it is important to notice that the educational systems may play a significant role in these distinctions mentioned above. If educational institutions do not teach their learners the cross-culturally accepted discourse rules, they might easily struggle to use proper discourse structures in academic writing. Along with this, “the concept that some of the difficulties experienced by second language writers may be

accounted for in part by intercultural differences in study genres” (Kara, 2004, p. 56). These aspects might be the reason for L1 writers to “often consider the writing of NNSs digressive, vague, and insufficiently explicit if it does not follow the relatively rigid norms of essay writing and textual moves...” (Hinkel, 1997, p. 362).

However, Silva (1993) found that there are aspects that make them remarkably similar. This may rely upon the idea that, nowadays, language instructors are suggesting ESL writing practitioners to use L1 features in their writing. To find ways to express their ideas linguistically and rhetorically both L1 and L2 writers take the following steps, namely, *planning*, *writing*, and *revising* (p. 657). The IRIS CENTER (2021, Planning section, para. 1) defines *planning* as “the use of a deliberate and organized approach to tackling a *writing* task and includes a writer’s first thoughts or basic ideas about the topic.” Regarding *writing*, it is the stage in which the writer creates an organized rough draft that integrates the thoughts they brought forth and gathered during the planning step. Some important aspects to consider at this stage are the following: the writer needs to compound former and current ideas, keep aligned with the aim of their paper, utilize grammar rules correctly, and look at their target audience (IRIS CENTER, 2021, Writing section, para. 1). As for *revising*, it “allows the writer to consider the content, quality, and clarity of his or her composition.” (IRIS CENTER, 2021, Revising section, para. 1)

Research Questions

The following are the questions that motivated this study. How does the use of moves differ between Introduction chapters written by English L1 writers and by English L2 writers? What is the most recurrent step category found in essays written by English L1 writers and essays written by English L2 writers?

Method

Data Collection

The data for this research was a corpus. One of the options to collect the data was to ask English learners to provide samples of their college/university academic essays. However, the validity of this selection might be threatened considering that those essays may have been revised only by their peers and professors to accomplish their class objectives. On the other hand, gathering the academic essays from established corpora increases the validity and credibility of the sources. Corpora are usually collected for research purposes (at least in the field of Linguistics). Therefore, this was the main reason for building up the corpus for this study based on the two following sources. The first, was the *University of Birmingham's Essay bank* (2021) (<https://www.birmingham.ac.uk/schools/edacs/departments/englishlanguage/research/resources/essays/index.aspx>). They do not present information about when they started collecting the essays or the number of essays stored. However, they state that these materials have been donated by past and present English Language students. This source was used to find English learners' essays. Since this corpus provides access to academic writing in the Linguistics area from MA students with different L1s, it proved to be suitable for this study. On the other hand, the English native speakers' essays were gathered from the *Michigan Corpus of Upper-Level Student Papers* (MICUSP) (2009). This corpus holds "papers in 16 disciplines at 4 levels of 7 paper types with 8 textual features." (MICUSP, 2009) The corpus for this research consisted of 10 academic essays divided into two groups of five. A half was written by English native speakers and the other half by non-native English learners. The ten selected essays were ascribed to the field of Linguistics.

To undertake the qualitative analysis, it was suitable to take 5 research paper samples from each group (NS and NNS) The selection criteria is described as follows. The 10 essays should be written by undergraduate or first-year master students preferably. The main reason for this choice was that some students at those two levels may not have yet mastered their writing skills at the expected academic level. Therefore, it may be possible to find more areas of improvement within the two groups along with more similarities in their written rhetorical structures. Hence, the five English learners' essays were matched with five English native writer's essays to make an even number, which made the analysis less cumbersome. Once the essays were selected, their Introduction chapters were copied and pasted on two separate files based on the writer's nativeness to proceed to the coding.

In this step, the distinct moves were identified by marginal comments indicating the moves and their step(s)'s numbers and functions. Later, the Introduction chapters in each group were assigned a name based on the nativeness of their writers. Thus, Introductions written by English native speakers were named NS, plus the Introduction number as they were listed, and the Introduction heading, (e.g., NS1 Introduction, NS2 Introduction). On the other hand, as for the non-native speakers, the procedure was similar only differing in the label (e.g., NNS 1 Introduction, NNS 2 Introduction). This classification was carried through to make it easy to reference the Introductions in the following sections. After that, three color conventions (yellow for move 1, light green for move 2, and purple for move 3) were created and listed at the top left of each Introduction chapter's list file to distinguish among the three moves. Additionally, step numbers (e.g., Step 1, Step 2) were put in boldface at the beginning of their corresponding section to indicate the span covered by each step and their boundaries with respect to the next (see appendix A). Finally, the moves and steps were counted to find their frequency per group

and the total frequency along with their percentages and the move and step types (obligatory, conventional, and optional). All this information was categorized in tables.

Data Analysis

The analysis for this study was carried through an adapted CARS (Create a Research Space) model for thesis Introduction chapters' checklist, modified by Swales (1990) This instrument proposes a rhetorical analysis of essay Introduction sections by identifying their rhetorical moves. According to Connor et al. (2007), a rhetorical move describes “a section of a text that performs a specific communicative function. Each move not only has its own purpose but also contributes to the overall communicative purposes of the genre” (p. 23). The result of the organization of rhetorical moves is known as rhetorical structure. (Van Lacum, E. B., et al., 2014) Before presenting the results in the next section, it is important to describe the main characteristics of the moves described in the CARS model adapted by Swales (1990) for a better understanding. Swales proposed a model to analyze Introduction chapters based on three moves, namely, *Move 1 (Establishing a Territory)* *Move 2 (Establishing a Niche)*, and *Move 3 (Occupying the Niche)*.

The *University of Southern California* (USC) in their Libraries Guides website supplies a description for the accomplishment of each of these moves. They explain that *Move 1 (Establishing a Territory)* can be reached in two ways. The first is by showing the relevance of the general area of study. The second is by exploring existing gaps based on earlier research. Regarding *Move 2 (Establishing a Niche)*, the USC Libraries website suggests that it can be achieved “by indicating a specific gap in previous research, by challenging a broadly accepted assumption, by raising a question, a hypothesis, or need, or by extending previous knowledge in

some way.” (University of Southern California Libraries, 2021, Introduction section, para. 4) As for Move 3 (*Occupying the Niche*), it denotes the way in which the current research will bring a new perspective and knowledge as opposed to earlier studies in that area. It also gives an outline of the development of the next sections of the paper. (University of Southern California Libraries, 2021) Thus, regarding the significance of the application of this model, Pujiyanti, I. A *et al.* suggest that one of the reasons why they employed the CARS model as a reference framework in their study was that researchers such as Loan and Pramoolsook (2014) and Wuttisrisiriporn (2017) have also implemented it substantially in their work, and have obtained interesting results (2018, p. 147). The CARS model is presented in Figure 1. Another important aspect analyzed in this study was the category of the moves and steps taken by the two groups of writers. These categories are named, *Obligatory*, *Conventional*, and *Optional*. Kanoksilapatham (2005, as cited by Pujiyanti, I. A et al.) claimed the percentage equivalences to appoint when the moves and steps should be described by each of the three former categories. This author suggests that the moves/ steps were *Obligatory* if they were found in all the Introduction chapters (100% occurrence). However, they would be considered *Conventional* if they occurred in 60-99% of the Introductions, and *Optional* if they took place in less than 60% of the Introductions (p.148).

Figure 1*Adapted CARS model by Swales (1990)*

	Found	Not found
Move 1: Establishing a Territory		
Step 1 - Claiming importance Step 2 - Making topic generalizations Step 3 - Reviewing items of previous research		
Move 2: Establishing a Niche		
Step 1a - Counterclaiming Step 1b - Indicating a gap Step 1c - Question-raising Step 1d - Continuing a tradition		
Move 3: Occupying the Niche		
Step 1a - Outlining purposes, Step 1b - Announcing present research Step 2 - Announcing principal findings Step 3 - Indicating article structure		

Results and Discussion

This section presents the results of the analysis of Native Speaker (NS) and Non- Native Speaker (NNS) writers' application of moves in their Introduction chapters. The first part of this section focuses on the frequency (Fr) and percentage (%) of the application of each move along with their categories (*Obligatory*, *Conventional*, and *Optional*). The second part of this section is concerned with the results and discussion of the frequency (Fr), total frequency (T Fr) and percentage (%) of occurrence of the categories per step.

Results of NS and NNS Application of Moves

The following tables describe the findings from the NS and NNS use of moves.

Frequency of moves found in 10 research papers' Introduction chapters by NS and NNS

Table 1. NS				Table 2. NNS			
Moves	Fr NS (n=5)	%	Categories	Moves	Fr NNS (n=5)	%	Categories
1.Establishing a Territory	5	100	Obligatory	1.Establishing a Territory	5	100	Obligatory
2.Establishing a Niche	4	80	Conventional	2.Establishing a Niche	2	40	Optional
3.Occupying the Niche	3	60	Conventional	3.Occupying the Niche	5	100	Obligatory

Move 1 (Establishing a Territory)

In both NS and NNS groups, *Move 1* was categorized as *Obligatory* since it was used by the five writers of each group in their Introduction chapters (Fr=5 / 100%). Examples from the two groups are shown below.

Example 1: Most of the current research being conducted surrounding the newly formed Nicaraguan Sign Language has been focused on the role of children in its creation and development. Proponents of creolization theories which emphasize the importance of the innate capacities of children in language creation and acquisition have cited the events of the language's formation as evidence in support of their theories. (NS 3)

Example 2 The learning of a second/foreign language is a process that requires exhaustive work for both teachers and students. Teachers need to combine their teaching skills and techniques to provide comprehensible and meaningful input that will allow students to obtain communicative competence (Hedge, 2000). Students on their behalf need to process the intake of information and transform it into output. That is, producing the target language with the help of all the information they obtain from their instructor, other students and other resources available (Hedge, 2000). (NNS 2)

Example 1 is coded as *Move 1* since the writer claims the importance of conducting research on the topic of the new Nicaraguan Sign language, and the role children are playing in its creation. Another note made by the writer in this move is that proponents of language formation theories have found support for their view of children's ability to create and acquire language.

Example 2 falls into *Move 1* as well because the author shows the relevance of the topic by displaying the implications of learning a second/foreign language. The writer displays the challenges faced by teachers and students in the language learning process along with the skills that both parts need to develop or apply to be successful.

Move 2 (Establishing a Niche)

In this move, the two groups reported different results. On the one hand, the NS group shows that *Move 2* was categorized as *Conventional* (Fr=4 / 80%). On the other hand, The NNS

group reports that *Move 2* was coded as *Optional* (Fr=2 / 40%). The following are examples of this move taken from both groups.

Example 3 However, one issue that has not received as much attention in the literature as it perhaps warrants is that of multiple hedging (using more than one hedge in a given statement, such as in “this may suggest...” or “this could perhaps be...”).
(NS 1)

Example 4 The argument so far may suggest that teachers are likely to have a responsibility, especially ones working with EFL classrooms of Japanese learners, to look for an approach to deal with the above issues, by first getting some experience with the approach and then utilizing their experiences to help these learners. The literature also makes similar suggestions. For instance, Brazil commented on the learners’ aims regarding spoken English and their teachers’ responsibility as follows:” (NNS 1)

As shown above, examples 3-4 have been coded as *Move 2* since they refer to previous research. Example 3 takes this move by indicating a gap in previous research when the author claims that “one issue that has not received as much attention in the literature as it perhaps warrants is that of multiple hedging.” (NS 1).

As for Example 4, the author refers to previous research to extend previous knowledge as in the following quote “The literature also makes similar suggestions. For instance, Brazil commented on the learners’ aims regarding spoken English and their teachers’ responsibility as follows” (NNS 1).

Move 3 (Occupying the Niche)

This move reported different results from the two groups. It was coded as *Conventional* (Fr=3 / 60%) in the NS group, while in the NNS group, it was categorized as *Obligatory* (Fr=5 / 100%). The following are examples of *Move 3* from the two groups.

Example 5 This paper, however, will examine the role of adult ... in order to determine to what extent (if any) adult input is necessary for a Creole to form. We will review several positions held by scholars supporting primarily child-driven creolization theories, and also several theories stressing the importance of adults in Creole formation. (NS 3)

Example 6 The test is used as a measurement and placement tool of newly enrolled high school students. I begin this paper by presenting a brief discussion of the relevant theoretical background of testing and important test characteristics such as validity, reliability and practicality. Then, I describe the test under discussion and the context in which it is used. Finally, I provide an analysis of its creation, use and characteristics. (NNS 4)

Example 5 was categorized as *Move 3* because the author describes how the paper will be developed by stating the following, “We will review several positions held by scholars supporting primarily child-driven creolization theories, and also several theories stressing the importance of adults in Creole formation.” (NS 3)

Example 6 was also classified as *Move 3* since the author introduces the structure of the paper by claiming the following quote “I begin this paper by presenting a brief discussion of the relevant theoretical background of testing...” (NNS 4)

Findings for Research Question 1

The first research question that ruled this study is introduced as follows. How does the use of moves differ between Introduction chapters written by English L1 writers and by English L2 writers? Since this research is concerned with the analysis of rhetorical moves in L1 and L2 writers, it needs to consider the field of *Contrastive Rhetoric*. Sanchez-Escobar (2012) explains how this field has evolved from focusing on pedagogical concerns and merging contrastive and error analysis into the analysis of “discourse structures across culture and genres” (p.21). Therefore, *Contrastive Rhetoric* is directly associated with this research, which explores the differences in the rhetorical structures of ten Introduction chapters of research papers written by English native speakers and English learners. The instrument used to approach this analysis was the modified CARS model by Swales (1990). This model describes three of rhetorical moves that have been widely used by different authors (Bunton, 2002; Pujiyanti, I. A et al., 2018; Swales, 1990; Loan & Pramoolsook, 2014) to examine the rhetorical structure of Introduction chapters of academic essays. These moves are identified as: Move 1 (*Establishing a Territory*), Move 2 (*Establishing a Niche*), and Move 3 (*Occupying the Niche*). Additionally, another area that supports this research is the Rhetorical Structure Theory (RST), which has yielded effective results in regard to the analysis of textual rhetorical structures (Da Cunha and Iruskieta, 2010, p. 564).

In relation to the types of moves, the frequency of occurrence of *Move 1 (Establishing a Territory)* by the two groups in the present study shows that there was 100% efficacy in its application. Abdolmalaki et al. (2019) also named *Move 1* as *obligatory* (as claimed by Kanoksilapatham, 2005) since their findings yielded the same frequency (100%) in the two thesis

categories. (p.120) These results denote that *Move 1* might be an *obligatory* step for distinct writers to take when drafting their research papers.

In addition, although there are differences in the academic levels of the writers in the current study (Undergraduate and MA) compared to the PhD writers reported by Abdolmalaki et al. (2019), both groups made of *Move 1* an *obligatory* step. From this comparison, it can be assumed that this inclination toward the use of *Move 1* by the two groups does not rely upon the writer's academic level. In contrast, it might be ruled by the general features of academic writing.

Another aspect to discuss from the findings of the present study is that the two groups of writers differ in their nativeness. However, this fact did not prevent them to lean toward applying *Move 1* in their Introduction chapters. Hence, nativeness does not appear to be an obstacle for writers across languages to employ *Move 1*, at least when composing the Introduction chapters of research papers. In relation to the first research question of this study, the discussion about the use of *Move 1* implies that both NS and NNS make similar choices in their Introduction chapters.

On the other hand, *Move 2 (Establishing a Niche)* yielded different results concerning the frequency of occurrence in the two groups in the current study. Although this move was employed by both NS and NNS groups, it was categorized as *Conventional* (according to Kanoksilapatham, 2005) for the NS group with a Fr 4=80%. Yet in the NNS group *Move 2* was classified as *Optional* with a Fr 2=40%. The difference between these findings might rely on the assumption that even at the Master academic level, NNS have not yet mastered their writing skills according to the English expectations for academic writing. This idea is linked to what Silva (2012) proposes by claiming that “ESL composing processes seem generally more laborious than those in the L1. Planning requires more effort and generates material that is less detailed, developed and

useful” (p.28). This author also affirms that the focus of the revision step by writers is usually put into grammatical and lexical aspects causing their revision abilities to decrease. (Silva, 2012, p. 28) Furthermore, the rhetorical differences between the learner’s L1 and their L2 might be one of the reasons for their poor results regarding *Move 2*. (Connor, 2012, p. 494; Fakhri, 2009, p. 307) Moreover, “no matter how proficient the FL learners, their compositions will be rhetorically deviant from the accepted norms of the target language.”(Kaplan, 1966, as cited by El-daly, 2012, p. 159; Sajid, 2016, p. 71) These four observations might be compelling reasons to assume that the complexity of the writing process and the writer’s focus on lexical and grammatical might deflect their attention from consistently employing the features of *Move 2*. In contrast, NS may have been more successful in the application of *Move 2* due to their linguistic strength in their native language. While NNS may spend too much time in their writing linguistic processing, NS can take advantage of that time to focus on the rhetorical structure of their writing. However, NS may also be distracted by other factors related or unrelated to their writing process, which may prevent them from applying this move. Hence, the frequency of occurrence and the move categories are the main differences found in *Move 2* in connection with the first research question of this study.

As for *Move 3 (Occupying the Niche)*, the results from the two were also different. The application of this move by the NS group was coded as *Conventional* with a Fr 3=60%, while in the NNS groups *Move 3* was categorized as *Obligatory* with a Fr 5=100%. These outcomes might be explained by the fact that 3 out the 5 NS writers were at the final year undergraduate level, while the other 2 Introduction chapters were written by First-year graduate participants. This might suggest a low emphasis on research and its written rhetorical structure at the undergraduate level, which might underestimate the depiction of new research perspectives, and the outline of the paper. On the other hand, all the NNS Introduction chapters were written by participants at the master’s

level. From this fact, it can be assumed that due to a stronger research focus at this level, MA writers might be more encouraged to present the current research perspective along with the paper structure's outline in their Introduction chapters. Consequently, vis-à-vis the first research question of this study, the application of *Move 3* differs in the frequency of use and the move category between the NS and NNS groups.

As for the present study, although there are differences between the NS and NNS groups in some of the aspects analyzed (Frequency, Percentages, and Categories), the results of this section show that this model was effective in identifying the three moves throughout the ten Introduction chapters. These findings are aligned with those met by Abdolmalaki et al. (2019) about the rhetorical structure of PhD thesis introductions from Article-based thesis and Traditional thesis (AT and TT). Their outcomes report that the three moves aforementioned were found in the two types of theses. (p.120) In addition, the findings reported by Pujiyanti, I. A et al. (2018) show that these three “communicative moves” appeared in twenty introduction chapters of English master theses. The data for this study were retrieved from Indonesian students in two different fields, namely, English Language Education and Applied Linguistics. These results stand for 100% frequency of occurrence, which categorize the use of the three moves as *obligatory*. (p.149) Furthermore, the use of these moves as an *obligatory* step was likewise part of the findings of the research conducted by Loan & Pramoolsook (2014, as cited by Pujiyanti, I. A et al., 2018).

The above-mentioned results correspond to the claim made by Silva (1993), who suggests that due to English language instructor's encouragement for L2 writers to adopt characteristics of L1 writers, the writing outcomes from both groups are becoming more alike. This might be one of the reasons for the findings of the current study to be similar in terms of the frequency occurrence

of moves by both NS and NNS writers. Hence, there are no differences in this aspect regarding the first research question in the current research.

Results of NS and NNS Application of Steps Categories

The identification of the frequency of occurrence of step categories was another important aspect analyzed in this study. These categories appeared from the analysis of the frequency (Fr), total frequency (T Fr) and percentage (%) of steps by move. Based on the percentage equivalence explained by Kanoksilapatham (2005), two step categories, namely, *Optional* and *Conventional* were identified in the analysis of the ten Introduction chapters. The most prevailing step category was *Optional*, with 7 occurrences, while the category *Conventional* appeared 3 times. These findings are displayed in Tables 3 and 4.

Table 3

Optional Steps taken by NS and NNS writers

Moves	Steps	Fr		T Fr	%	Category
		NS (n=5)	NNS (n=5)			
Move 1	3: Reviewing items of previous research	3	1	4	40	Optional
Move 2	1a: Counterclaiming	2	1	3	30	Optional
	1b: Indicating a gap	3	0	3	30	Optional
	1c: Question-raising	1	0	1	10	Optional
	1d: Continuing a tradition	1	2	3	30	Optional
Move 3	1a: Outlining purposes	1	4	5	50	Optional
	1b: Announcing present research	2	1	3	30	Optional

Examples of *Optional* steps

Example 7 *Move 2-Step 1d (Continuing tradition)* Therefore, it seems prudent to expect that each of the three forms of Nicaraguan Sign Language will have formed

from a different set of input. In other words, the amount of adult vs. child input required for each of the three versions of the language may vary. (NS 3)

Example 8 *Move 2-Step 1a. (Counterclaiming)* However, language learners assimilate and produce the language according to their interlanguage system (Hedge, 2000) (NNS 2)

Example 7 shows how the author continues the tradition of research by extending the knowledge obtained from previous studies by introducing this idea by the adverb “Therefore” which usually introduces a logical result, “*Therefore*, it seems prudent to expect that each of the three forms of Nicaraguan Sign Language will have formed from a different set of input.” (NS 3)

Example 8 introduces a counterargument by starting the sentence with the adverb “However”, which usually introduces an opposing idea. “However, language learners assimilate and produce the language according to their interlanguage system (Hedge, 2000)” (NNS 2)

Table 4

Conventional Steps taken by NS and NNS writers

Moves	Steps	Fr NS (n=5)	NNS (n=5)	T Fr	%	Category
M 1	1: Claiming importance	4	5	9	90	Conventional
	2: Making topic generalizations	4	2	6	60	Conventional
M 3	3: Indicating article structure	4	2	6	60	Conventional

Examples of *Conventional* steps

Example 9 *Move 1-Step 1 (Claiming importance)*. The task of recognizing textual entailment is a difficult one that can be approached in a number of ways. (NS 4)

Example 10 *Move 1-Step 1 (Claiming importance)*. Nowadays teachers are expected to evolve their teaching practices and adapt it to their constantly changing students. It seems only logical to constantly develop teaching approaches to suit learners' evolving needs. (NNS 5)

Example 9 emphasizes the importance of the research topic by introducing the following idea about textual entailment "The task of recognizing textual entailment is a difficult one that can be approached in a number of ways." (NS 4)

Example 10 claims the importance of the research topic by showing that "It seems only logical to constantly develop teaching approaches to suit learners' evolving needs." (NNS 5)

Findings for Research Question 2

The second research question of the current study is more aligned with the results of this section. This question reads as follows: What is the most recurrent step category found in essays written by English L1 writers and essays written by English L2 writers? This section discusses the results of the analysis of the steps taken by move. These steps were classified by category. The categories were named based on the percentage equivalences suggested by Kanoksilapatham (2005) following the same procedure shown in the Moves section discussion above. In this case, the percentages resulted from the total frequency of occurrence (NS+NNS) per step.

The results of this section showed that 10 out of the 11 steps proposed by Swales (1990) were employed by NS and NNS writers in their Introduction chapters in this study. The steps are listed as follows. From *Move 1, Steps 1 (Claiming importance), 2 (Making topic generalizations), and 3 (Reviewing items of previous research)*. From *Move 2, Steps 1a (Counterclaiming), 1b (Indicating a gap), 1c (Question-raising), and 1d (Continuing a tradition)*. From *Move 3, Steps 1a (Outlining purposes), 1b (Announcing present research), and Step 3 (Indicating article structure)*. Thus, the step categories *Optional* and *Conventional* appeared from the step's total frequency and their percentages. There were seven *Optional* steps (*M1-St3, M2-St1a, M2-St1b, M2-St1c, M2-St1d, M3-St1a, M3-St1b*), and three *Conventional* steps (*M1-St1, M1-St2, M3-St3*).

Therefore, from these results, the answer for question two is that the most recurrent step category is *Optional* by showing seven occurrences, as opposed to three occurrences found in the *Conventional* step category throughout the ten essays written by NS and NNS.

Conclusion

Academic writing is one of the most prominent tasks that students are required to perform in their College/University life, therefore, it needs a lot of attention. One important aspect that may determine writing effectiveness is the approach to rhetorical structure. As Da Cunha and Iruskieta (2010) claim, the Rhetorical Structure Theory (RST) has proven to be an efficient tool to analyze the connection between discursive and rhetorical characteristics. (p. 564) There is an assumption that English L2 writers have difficulties to effectively convey their ideas through writing in academic contexts due to the interference of the rhetorical patterns found in their L1. (Kaplan, 1966, as cited by El-daly, 2012; Sajid, 2016; Silva, 2012) Then, the RST was a suitable tool to consider in this research. This study was developed through the lenses of the

Sociocultural Theory and Contrastive Rhetoric within the area of Second Language Acquisition (SLA). Hence, the aim of this study was to explore the differences in the use of rhetorical moves and steps in 10 research paper Introduction chapters by English L1 and L2 writers. The data analysis was performed by using the adapted Swales (1990) model for the analysis of academic writing Introduction chapters. The corpus for this study was composed by 5 research papers Introduction chapters written by English native speakers, and 5 written by English learners.

The results of this research reveal that L1 and L2 writers are consistent in the use of the three rhetorical moves proposed by Swales (1990). The two groups employed the moves, namely, *Move 1 (Establishing a Territory)*, *Move 2 (Establishing a Niche)*, and *Move 3 (Occupying the Niche)*. However, they did it at different levels identified by three categories, *Obligatory*, *Conventional*, and *Optional*. Native speakers (NS) tend to employ more *Conventional* moves, while the Non-native speakers' (NNS) trend is to use make more *Obligatory* moves. Another important result that confirms what some researchers (e.g., Sajid, 2016; Silva, 2012) stated was that NNS have difficulties to express their ideas in the target language. These authors claim that this difficulty may be caused by the NNS's L1 interference. On the other hand, despite their lower academic level, NS had a better performance in this aspect. A plausible assumption for these results is that since they used their L1 to write their papers, they have more control of the linguistic and some rhetorical features of their language. Lastly, there was a prominent use of *Optional* steps by the two groups compared to the *Conventional* steps they employed.

In conclusion, this study proves that there are differences between English L1 and L2 writers in relation to the moves they take when authoring research papers. Additionally, there is a

distinction in the step categories found in NS and NNS. Consequently, the two research questions that motivated this research were answered by the results outlined above. Therefore, this research may have significant implications for English academic writing instructors. These results may help them to consider steps they may take to inform and improve their teaching practices. In addition, this study might be meaningful to students to be more conscious about their writing skills and the type of rhetorical structures required to draft academic papers.

Some limitations of this study might be the number papers and the limited textual genre analyzed. Integrating writers/texts from different areas of study makes it more likely to find differences in rhetorical moves and steps. Besides, including a bigger number of research papers from different fields might be a key step to get a wider range of findings in the analysis of rhetorical structures. In addition, it creates the possibility to find more remarkable differences among academic writers.

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Appendix A

Coding sample

Non-native speaker's Introduction chapter

Conventions

Move 1: Establishing a Territory

Move 2: Establishing a Niche

Move 3: Occupying the Niche

INTRODUCTION

Improving EFL writing through the process approach

STEP 1. The learning of a second/foreign language is a process that requires exhaustive work for both teachers and students. Teachers need to combine their teaching skills and techniques to provide comprehensible and meaningful input that will allow students to obtain communicative competence (Hedge, 2000). Students on their behalf need to process the intake of information and transform it into output. That is, producing the target language with the help of all the information they obtain from their instructor, other students and other resources available (Hedge, 2000).

STEP 1d. Furthermore, the four main communication skills: speaking, listening, reading and writing, play a key role in providing individuals with the necessary tools to obtain communicative competence. According to Hymes, a speaker is a competent communicator when messages are delivered and interpreted while their meaning is being negotiated (in Brown, 2000). The communication of ideas and reaching communicative competence is, as Savignon adds, a 'dynamic interpersonal construct that can be examined only by means of the overt performance of two or more individuals in the process of communication' (in Brown, 2000:246).

STEP 1a. However, language learners assimilate and produce the language according to their interlanguage system (Hedge, 2000): they may not understand everything they hear or read thus impacting how they speak or write. The interactive characteristic that languages carry links listening with

speaking and reading with writing. On one side, as Brown & Yule (1983) and Slade (1986) mention conversations are “listener-or-person oriented” (cited in Tsang & Wong, 2002). That is, what is spoken depends on what is listened to just as reading and writing are linked and depend on one another. Richards & Renandya add that reading texts may enhance students’ exposure to good written models (2002). Writing is a complex process (Bell & Burnaby, 1984 in Nunan, 1989), which is far from being spontaneous or easy (Hedge, 2000: 302).

STEP 1b. This paper provides a brief description of the process approach to writing and the various stages that may enhance students’ writing skills. **STEP 3.** Five samples are provided accompanied by a brief analysis of how planning, drafting and revising may help writers improve their specific flaws. Five different text types written by low intermediate and intermediate EFL learners were considered for this paper. The first sample, text 1 (appendix A) is a descriptive text, text 2 (appendix B) an informal letter, text 3 (appendix C) an opinion essay, text 4 (appendix D) a descriptive essay and finally text 5 (appendix F) a problem/solving essay.

Appendix B

Coding Sample

Native speaker's Introduction chapter

Conventions

Move 1: Establishing a Territory

Move 2: Establishing a Niche

Move 3: Occupying the Niche

INTRODUCTION

Attitudes towards and Frequency of Multiple Hedging in Written Academic English

STEP 1. Over the past 20 years or so, hedging has become an increasingly well-researched aspect of academic writing. As with any identifiable aspect of academic writing, much of the research on hedging attempts to define it, theoretically and functionally. Because of the negative treatment hedging has received in the past, many studies (e.g. Skelton 1988a and 1988b; Myers 1996; Channell 1990; Banks 1998; Hyland 1994 and 1998) aim to validate the presence and legitimacy of hedges in academic writing.

STEP 3. Other research (e.g. Hyland 1994 and 1998) has offered advice on how best to teach hedging in an EAP context. Research has been undertaken on the pragmatics of hedging and its link to politeness, its social implications, and how it affects the negotiation of meaning between writer and reader (e.g. R. Lakoff 1972; Myers 1996; Salager-Meyer 1994). Several contrastive rhetoric studies have looked at hedging in different cultures (eg Martín-Martín & Burgess 2004) and the possible linguistic transfer that may result from attempts to hedge in the L2 (e.g. Clyne 1991; Hinkel 1997). Some attention has been paid to the strength and presence of hedging and the variations thereof in certain genres (such as the IMRD pattern for research papers) (Salager-Meyer 1994; Martín-Martín & Burgess 2004; Banks 1994b). **STEP 1b.** However, one issue that has not received as much attention in the literature as it perhaps warrants is that of multiple hedging (using more than one hedge in a given statement, such as in "this may suggest..." or "this could perhaps be..."). The fact that multiple hedging does indeed occur is evident from a look at

almost any piece of academic writing, and it has not been entirely ignored in the research. Many studies mention it in passing; however, few devote any significant amount of space or time to its study. What this lack of focused attention leaves unclear is just how often multiple hedging occurs, whether or not it is considered acceptable (and if so how many hedges must be used before multiple hedging becomes overhedging), and what, if any, factors, such as level of education, native vs. non-native speaker status, etc, may affect the strength or amount of a given writer's use of hedges. **STEP 1a.** In this paper, I will look specifically at multiple hedging as a phenomenon of academic writing. **STEP 3.** I will start by providing an extensive review of the literature on hedging, focusing first on how hedging has been defined, and gathering from these different definitions a working definition to apply to my own research; and focusing secondly on how the notions of overhedging and underhedging have been addressed in the literature, in order to see if multiple hedging has received any sort of value judgment by the academic community. After this literature review, I will turn to my own research: a look at multiple hedging in the Hyland Corpus of academic text (which attempts to answer the question of how often multiple hedging occurs) and a survey which attempts to assess the evaluation of hedging expressions of various levels of strength by different academic groups (this survey attempts to address the acceptability of multiple hedging and the factors that may affect the strength of a writer's hedging expressions). I conclude by summarizing the results of my research and exploring how these results may be useful to the academic community.